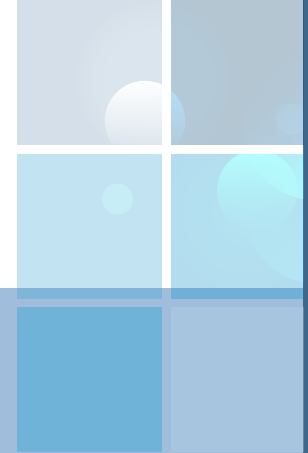
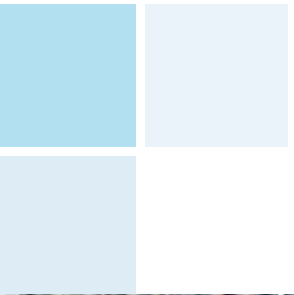


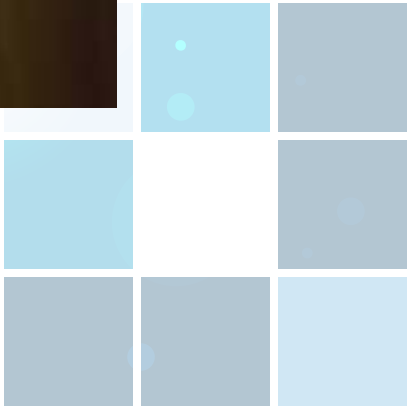


MINNESOTA'S STRATEGIC WORKFORCE PLAN 2016-2020



An Executive Summary of the Minnesota State Combined Plan approved by the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education as required by the Workforce and Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA).







By many measures, Minnesota is in a strong economic position. Boasting one of the most highly-educated workforces in the country, one of the lowest unemployment rates and a high labor force participation rate, nearly all signs point toward continued economic growth and prosperity.

While these indicators are headed in one direction, a number of other indicators highlight the educational and employment disparities that continue to persist. Unemployment and poverty rates for communities of color continue to increase, while median income has decreased. People with disabilities experience over twice the rate of unemployment as those without a disability. Youth are becoming increasingly disconnected from education and the labor market. Minnesota's future economic prosperity requires a

workforce development system that provides greater employment opportunities for those experiencing barriers to employment and meets the skill needs of employers.

After months of local, regional and state workforce development discussions, Minnesota developed a state workforce development action plan. This publication is an executive summary of the plan. Implementation work is already underway by leaders across the state. This includes the Governor's Workforce Development Board – GWDB, Minnesota's sixteen local workforce development boards, regional planning contributors, community and economic development, state agencies, elected officials, community-based organizations, education, labor, service provider partners, and the philanthropy community. These leaders are engaging new voices and developing new workforce development opportunities and approaches. Our collective impact is the key to the success and outcomes of this plan.

MINNESOTA'S STATE COMBINED PLAN UNDER WIOA

Minnesota's Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB) has statutory authority and a mission to analyze and recommend workforce development policies to the governor and legislature toward talent development, resource alignment and system effectiveness to ensure a globally competitive workforce for Minnesota. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) empowers the GWDB, state and local elected officials and private-sector-led workforce boards with the responsibility of developing a strategic, integrated plan that supports economic growth and labor force needs intended to grow the capacity and performance of the state's workforce development system.

Reflecting workforce development discussions and planning at the local, regional, and state level and as required by WIOA, in March 2016, Minnesota submitted a State Combined Plan to the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education. In late October 2016, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) Commissioner Shawntera M. Hardy sent the GWDB members a letter to share that the U. S. Departments of Labor and Education approved Minnesota's plan and to thank the GWDB for its continued partnership.

The Minnesota State Combined Plan 2016-2020 is the GWDB's Strategic Plan. The complete plan is posted on www.gwdb.org. This publication is an executive summary of the plan's six strategic elements and summarizes the key and integrated work that is already underway across this state to implement this plan. Periodically, as data is available, we will share our collective impact stories, best practices and results.

VISION OF THE STATE PLAN

To have a healthy economy where all Minnesotans have – or are on a path to – meaningful employment and a family sustaining wage, and where all employers are able to fill jobs in demand.

GOALS OF THE STATE PLAN

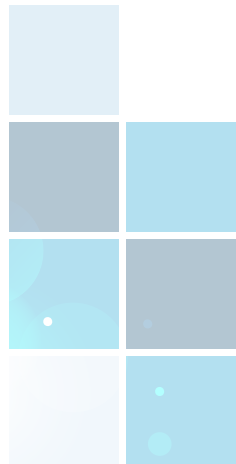
1. To reduce educational and employment disparities based on race or disability to provide greater opportunity for all Minnesotans.
2. To build employer-led industry sector partnerships focused on better understanding of the skills that employers need and connecting skilled workers to those opportunities.

STRATEGIES OF THE STATE PLAN

The most effective method to achieve these goals is to strategically build on the state's robust Career Pathway System and align it with the purposes of WIOA and the needs of Minnesota's businesses and workforce.

The six key strategies are:

- Business engagement
- Community engagement
- Customer-centered design
- Funding and resources
- Policy and system alignment
- System management



STRATEGIC ELEMENT 1: BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

Businesses lead in the identification and development of career pathway maps that target occupations in demand and provide family sustaining wages.



STATE PLAN

Minnesota's business engagement strategy has its foundation in efforts already underway by the GWDB, state agencies, Local Workforce Development Boards, and industry sectors. In consultation with DEED's Labor Market Information (LMI) Office, the GWDB identified priority industry sectors for the state. After several months of discussion at committee and GWDB quarterly meetings, the state's priority industry sectors formed the basis of the GWDB's private sector membership. The GWDB's twenty-one private sector members from these statewide industry sectors will provide leadership and representation of employer-led sector partnerships.

- Health Care & Social Assistance
- Manufacturing
- Professional & Business Services
- Construction
- Natural Resources (including Agriculture and Mining)

LOCAL AND REGIONAL PLANS

- Minnesota's Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) have a long-history of using LMI data and formal analysis to inform their planning and service delivery.
- Regional Plans will also use LMI data, including real-time job data, to develop business-led sector partnerships.
- Regional Plans reflect the one to three priority industry sectors identified by the LWDBs that are experiencing occupations in demand, through either growth or the need for replacement workers.
- LWDBs are also examining emerging industries that have growth potential.

MINNESOTA'S ROLE

- Provide general oversight to the process.
- Adopt the regional plans.
- Assist with creating a universal approach to sector practices to share across the state.

OUTCOMES

- Authentic priority Career Pathway models established with clear routes to attaining jobs in occupations that are in demand and pay family-sustaining wages.
- Career Pathways components include identifying the demand for each occupation; establishing the technical skill requirements tied to a post-secondary credential recognized by the industry; and conducting an analysis of workforce composition as it relates to employment levels of populations experiencing disparate impact.

PERFORMANCE MILESTONES

- Sector partnerships established and "road maps" created for selected sectors.
- Road maps overlaid on the educational pathways, including work-based learning and apprenticeships to determine change needs to align education and training opportunities with career pathways to scale within the in-demand occupations.
- An established process for monitoring of occupational trends that will support the needed flexibility of the Career Pathways System to respond to changing economic conditions.
- A developed measurement system within the sector strategies that evaluates the effectiveness of the partnerships and their contributions and support of the other strategies.



STRATEGIC ELEMENT 2: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Communities experiencing inequities in education and employment and providers with specialized services contribute to the design and delivery of activities within the career pathway.



STATE PLAN

Community engagement has a critical role in strengthening services, connections between providers, and the accessibility of services for impacted populations. It builds on current efforts by the GWDB, Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), state agencies and community-based organizations to (a) recognize and prioritize best practices, (b) pinpoint common challenges, and (c) share educational and employment outcomes. The focus of this strategy is

1. **Service provider engagement** – Review current practices around existing career pathway programs funded by federal, state, private and philanthropic organizations to ensure continued growth of Minnesota’s Career Pathway System.
2. **Community member engagement** – Minnesota has a diverse provider network of community-based organizations. These organizations offer specialized approaches to serve populations experiencing inequities in education and employment outcomes, including communities of color, tribal governments serving the seven Anishinaabe and four Dakota communities, individuals with disabilities, and disconnected youth and homelessness.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL PLANS

- The primary responsibility for this strategy are the LWDBs within the six workforce development regions. In the regional plans, LWDBs outline how they will actively engage communities experiencing disparate impacts in education and employment outcomes and engage with service providers that have specialized skills in working with the identified populations. To assist the LWDBs, state agencies will provide data and other analysis, demographic and programmatic information, and ensure that all system providers and their funding efforts are known by the LWDBs.

MINNESOTA’S ROLE

- Establish a Task Force that will broaden and more fully engage communities of color experiencing disparate impact with educational and employment outcomes and make actionable recommendations.
- Oversight and support of regional plan implementation.

OUTCOMES

- Improved outcomes for populations facing barriers in education and employment.
- A larger, more coordinated support network among providers.
- Build stronger connections to these communities and specialized service providers to increase access and improve outcomes for individuals with barriers to employment.

PERFORMANCE MILESTONES

- Validation of data and system barriers identified; strategies developed.
- Strategies applied to modifying service delivery for programs being aligned with career pathways.
- An established strategy for expanding on-going culturally-relevant career pathways programming.
- A developed measurement system that monitors the impact of the strategies and the outcomes of disparate impact communities.



STRATEGIC ELEMENT 3: CUSTOMER CENTERED DESIGN

Better understanding the needs of businesses by stronger engagement, the state will design and support trainings that are unique for job seekers that need multiple services and “on ramps” to be successful through authentic career pathway opportunities.



STATE PLAN

Career pathway design is an approach to workforce development that supports workers’ multiple transitions between education and employment. Customers are supported by an integrated collection of programs and services intended to identify in-demand career opportunities, identify and provide continuous education and training needs for identified in-demand career opportunities and then these customers are placed in the in-demand careers. This design requires many partners across education and workforce training establishments, but it is the most effective pathway toward full employment, particularly as it relates to targeted populations with barriers to employment.

By focusing on the tactical and strategic aspects of a customer designed career pathway, and using the success of existing career pathways programming, a greater scale of service and success rates for disparate-impact communities will be achieved. Employer and community engagement also contribute to customer-centered design by offering individualized or culturally appropriate approaches. These efforts will improve access to services and the quality of services needed to address people of color, individuals with disabilities and disconnected youth.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL PLANS

Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) will review the practices of current career pathway initiatives and then assess them for successful elements to replicate and bring to scale. This work contributes toward the framework that gives local and regional flexibility based on available resources and service delivery partnerships.

MINNESOTA’S ROLE

- The primary responsibility for this strategy is coordinated by the GWDB in partnership with the LWDBs and state agencies.
- The Career Pathways Partnership, a standing committee of the GWDB, leads Minnesota’s Career Pathways System initiative by establishing state leadership and an operational framework to support regional sector-based career pathways.

OUTCOMES

- Flexible employment and training services design to improve completion rates.
- More customer-centered design of these services for job seekers who need multiple services and “on-ramps” to be successful.
- Authentic career pathway opportunities based on putting jobseekers with barriers to employment into high-demand careers with training and employer-valued credentials.
- More culturally relevant environments, including staff reflecting diversity of communities; accessible materials and websites or web tools; and outreach strategies engage job seekers where they are located.

PERFORMANCE MILESTONES

- Design approaches understood and strategies developed to modify services.
- Strategies implemented and program and policy alignment begins.
- Funding and resource needs for system improvements and scaling addressed.
- A measurement system that focuses on interim measures toward skill gains and program completion.



STRATEGIC ELEMENT 4: FUNDING AND RESOURCE NEEDS

Understand the resource capacity of federal, state, local and philanthropic organizations that fund and provide resources to the Career Pathways System.



STATE PLAN

Minnesota's Career Pathways System programs are funded and supported by federal, state and philanthropic resources. Recent funding and resources expansion have broadened career pathways approaches and offered new opportunities to service providers and job seekers. Minnesota will review and assess the various models to assist with disseminating best practices and to set a more strategic structure to the development of these programs.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL PLANS

Strong performance by the Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) and service providers led to Minnesota being awarded Workforce Investment Act (WIA) incentive funds and competitive grants. Other impacts include state appropriations that support additional youth services; services to individuals with disabilities; dislocated and incumbent workers; and adult basic education.

That being stated, funding and resources for service delivery present multiple challenges for LWDBs. They serve program eligible individuals and the general public. With the lack of dedicated funding for mandated services and a base level requirement that requires substantial financial support, existing funding streams intended for training activities are strained.

MINNESOTA'S ROLE

- Coordinated by the GWDB in partnership with LWDBs, state agencies and partner funders.
- Use assessment of resources and models to share best practices.
- Assist local boards with identifying better ways to coordinate and leverage resources.
- Work through the Career Pathways Partnership and other career pathways programs to gain greater alignment with state WIOA programs.
- As part of a larger Career Pathways System, focus on equity and economic demand.

OUTCOMES

- Funding and resources are maximized.
- More efficient use of resources.
- Understand resources needed for continued development of the Career Pathways System.

PERFORMANCE MILESTONES

- A system-wide understanding of capacity and strategies to align funding and resources at a strategic level, based on allowable and restricted activities.
- An overlay of funding and resources to the employment, education and training activities related to the selected career pathways to identify gaps in funding and resources that impact providers' services of participants' outcomes and identification of how to fill the "gaps."
- Recommendations on policy needs to support alignment of funding and resources from federal, state, local and philanthropic organizations.
- Develop a measurement system that is informed by funding and resource investments in career pathways programs for continuous improvement.



STRATEGIC ELEMENT 5: POLICY AND SYSTEM ALIGNMENT

Create system measures that assist with managing the building of a Career Pathways System, including process and outcome measures.



STATE PLAN

Minnesota recognizes the need to adapt state and local policies and the potential need for federal waivers to better align our Career Pathways System around equity and economic employment demand. Current career pathways programming shed light on a number of issues that require full system support to bring about the necessary changes. Through a review and recommendation process, these changes will begin implementation.

The primary responsibility for this strategy is with the state agencies. Policy and program alignment strategies will need to be coordinated by each agency responsible for specific programs.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL PLANS

Efforts are in progress between DEED and LWDB leaders through monthly redesign system program policy meetings. This collaborative process will be coordinated with the local boards and system partners as agreement is reached for potential new approaches that are based on customer-centered design and the available funding and resources.

MINNESOTA'S ROLE

- Foundational collaboration among state agencies involved in the National Governors Association's Talent Pipeline Policy Academy administered by the GWDB, will aid the policy alignment required for this strategic element to move forward.
- Support and lead the effort for federal and state legislative rule changes or waivers to ensure that needs are actionable.

OUTCOMES

- A Career Pathways System with appropriate intermittent measures and evaluation that lead to better performance outcomes for all populations.
- Stronger alignment of system components.
- More efficient use of resources, especially performance and outcome metrics because existing metrics do not adequately support career pathways, equity or employment demand.
- New performance policies developed that drive career pathways and equity employment goals.

PERFORMANCE MILESTONES

- A Career Pathways System report that outlines the critical intervals and barriers to success, including a specific response to populations experiencing inequities in education and employment outcomes.
- Strategies developed and implemented to increase the effectiveness of measuring the system inputs and outputs.
- The system dashboard is completed and implemented.
- The system dashboard is used to evaluate ongoing performance, best practices and system improvement recommendations.



STRATEGIC ELEMENT 6: SYSTEM MANAGEMENT

Create system measures that assist with managing the building of a Career Pathways System, including process and outcome measures.



STATE PLAN

Improving system management requires a coordinated effort of state agencies, state agency boards, local workforce development and school boards, and service providers across the system. Stemming from a shared vision and an understanding of outcomes and common measures, efforts need to focus on developing better approaches to measuring system processes and outcomes that validate a Career Pathways System and support the needs of a high quality workforce. This should be a long-term goal, based on how the other components and elements develop in this strategic plan.

Currently, Minnesota is working to redesign a system dashboard that complies with the requirements of WIOA, but adds factors that tell the state how well the system is supporting each region and the overall state economy. This foundational approach considers talent, trade and innovation as the three pillars of the benchmarking system. Beginning with the talent pillar, Minnesota will expand upon the important measures - beyond WIOA common measures – to look at interim, process and other outcome measures critical to each region of the state. The dashboard will also report on identified disparate impact populations that have been identified within each workforce development region. State agencies will have a role in metric development.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL PLANS

LWDBs will also support how the metrics are developed, how they are applied within the regions and how the regional goals will be established and reported.

MINNESOTA'S ROLE

- Primary responsibility for this strategy in coordination with the state agencies and LWDBs.
- Oversee the development and overall approach to the benchmarking system.

OUTCOMES




- A Career Pathways System with appropriate intermittent measures and evaluation that lead to better performance outcomes for all populations.
- System management approaches and tools to help monitor and measure the impact of new strategies and tools.
- Approaches may include standardized tools for initial assessments that can be shared across required partners or tools that create a shared intake process to streamline program access and referrals, as well as other best practices.




PERFORMANCE MILESTONES

- A Career Pathways System report that outlines the critical intervals and barriers to success, including a specific response to populations experiencing inequities in education and employment outcomes.
- Strategies developed and implemented to increase the effectiveness of measuring the system inputs and outputs.
- The system dashboard is completed and implemented.
- The system dashboard is used to evaluate ongoing performance, best practices and system improvement recommendations.



Strategic Plan Summary

STRATEGIC ELEMENT	STRATEGY	MINNESOTA'S ROLE	OUTCOMES
Business Engagement 	<p>Businesses lead in the identification and development of career pathways maps that target occupations in demand and provide family sustaining wages.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide general oversight to the process. ■ Adopt the regional plans. ■ Assist with creating a universal approach to sector practices to share across the state. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Career pathways models established with clear routes to attaining jobs in occupations that are in demand and pay family-sustaining wages. ■ Career Pathways components include identifying the demand for each occupation; establishing the technical skill requirements tied to a post-secondary credential recognized by the industry; and conducting an analysis of workforce composition as it relates to employment levels of populations experiencing disparate impact.
Community Engagement 	<p>Communities experiencing inequities in education and employment and providers with specialized services contribute to the design and delivery of activities within the career pathway.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Establish a Task Force that will broaden and more fully engage communities of color experiencing disparate impact with educational and employment outcomes and make actionable recommendations. ■ Oversight and support of regional plan implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Improved outcomes for populations facing barriers in education and employment. ■ A larger, more coordinated support network among providers. ■ Build stronger connections to these communities and specialized service providers to increase access and improve outcomes for individuals with barriers to employment.
Customer Centered Design 	<p>Better understanding the needs of businesses by stronger engagement, the state will design and support trainings that are unique for job seekers that need multiple services and “on ramps” to be successful through authentic career pathway opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The primary responsibility for this strategy will be coordinated by the GWDB in partnership with the LWDBs and state agencies. ■ The Career Pathways Partnership, a standing committee of the GWDB, leads Minnesota's Career Pathways System initiative by establishing state leadership and an operational framework to support regional sector-based career pathways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Flexible employment and training services designed to improve completion rates. ■ More customer-centered design of these services for job seekers who need multiple services and “on-ramps” to be successful. ■ Authentic career pathway opportunities based on putting jobseekers with barriers to employment into high-demand careers with training and employer-valued credentials. ■ More culturally relevant environments, including staff reflecting diversity of communities; accessible materials and websites or web tools; and outreach strategies engage job seekers where they are located.

STRATEGIC ELEMENT	STRATEGY	MINNESOTA'S ROLE	OUTCOMES
Funding and Resource Needs 	<p>Understand the resource capacity of federal, state, local and philanthropic organizations that fund and provide resources to the Career Pathways System.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Share best practices. ■ Provide technical assistance to coordinate and leverage resources. ■ Work through Career Pathways Partnership and other programs to gain alignment with state WIOA programs. ■ Focus on equity and economic demand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Funding and resources are maximized. ■ More efficient use of resources. ■ Understanding the resources needed for continued development of the Career Pathways System.
Policy and System Alignment 	<p>Create system measures that assist with managing the building of a Career Pathways System, including process and outcome measures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Foundational collaboration among state agencies involved in the National Governors Association's Talent Pipeline Policy Academy administered by the GWDB, will aid the policy alignment required for this strategic element to move forward. ■ Support and lead the effort for federal and state legislative rule changes or waivers to ensure that needs are actionable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A Career Pathways System with appropriate intermittent measures and evaluation that lead to better performance outcomes for all populations. ■ Stronger alignment of system components. ■ More efficient use of resources, especially performance and outcome metrics because existing metrics do not adequately support career pathways, equity, or employment demand. ■ New performance policies developed that drive career pathways and equity employment goals.
System Management 	<p>Create system measures that assist with managing the building of a Career Pathways System, including process and outcome measures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Primary responsibility for this strategy in coordination with the state agencies and LWDBs. ■ Oversee the development and overall approach to the benchmarking system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A Career Pathways System with appropriate intermittent measures that lead to better performance outcomes for all populations. ■ System management approaches and tools to help monitor and measure the impact of new strategies and tools. ■ Approaches may include standardized tools for initial assessments that can be shared across required partners or tools that create a shared intake process to streamline program access and referrals, as well as other best practices.



DEED

MN.GOV/DEED

Titles IB-Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker

Title III – Job Service

Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation Services & State Services for the Blind

Trade Adjustment Assistance For Workers

Jobs For Veterans Grant

Senior Community Service Employment

MDE

WWW.EDUCATION.STATE.MN.US

Title II – Adult Education & Family Literacy Act

DHS

MN.GOV/DHS

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

Employment & Training programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Work Programs under the Food and Nutrition Act

MNSCU

WWW.MNSCU.EDU

Carl D. Perkins Act – Post Secondary

Regional Workforce Development Area (RWDAs) Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs)





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December 2016

